AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH
Jerusalem and Baghdad
ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER

Confidential* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * **Not for Publication

Newsletter #8 1959-1960 Iran, March 3, 1960.

Following is the latest report from Bruce Howe, Annual Professor of the Baghdad School and Associate Director of the Iranian Prehistoric Project; its contents speak for themselves.

S. N. K.

To begin with, here is a summary report of the results obtained by the Iranian Prehistoric Project up to February 8, as prepared by Bob Braidwood, its director, which is important as background for its past and future researches:

The number of sites on our lists stands at 197. Most of these sites are prehistoric (we did not feel ourselves competent to judge the traces of later occupations) and 17 of the sites refer to caves or rock shelters. Two sites consist of extended hill-top scatters of earlier Paleolithic materials. Our Acheuleen hand-axe comes from one of these latter.

Ideally, one does the typological and chronological classification of a large group of materials collected in surface survey by reference to a nearby excavated archaeological sequence. In this respect we are very badly off indeed. Tepe Giyan in the Nehavand valley system, lies 130 kms. away; the site was dug some time ago, the assemblages of its succession are very incompletely represented in the site report and the nuances of Giyan's stratification are not clear. Next nearest to Kermanshah (at ca.260 kms.) lies the Palegawra-Karim Shahir-Jarmo complex of sites west of Suliemaniyah in Iraqi-Kurdistan. Since the excavation of these sites was our own work, we know their materials and sequence well for the time duration over which these sites range (ca. 12,000 to 6,750 B.C.). But for most of our comparative reference points for times earlier or later than this range, we have had to base our judgments on sites and sequences lying some greater distance from Kermanshah and often in quite different natural areas. There are such sites as Sialk (ca. 500 kms. to the east, overlooking a semi-arid plateau), the Susiana group (ca. 500 kms. to the south, in a lowland alluvial plain), or the sites of the prehistoric sequence in either the southern alluvium or the northern grasslands of Mesopotamia. But all such are of questionable validity for direct comparative archaeological purposes with our Kermanshah surface material. Nevertheless, nothing else is available to us.

Hence the chronological classification we have constructed here depends on our understandings of the materials noted above - or on even more distant materials and sequences, as far as the flint industries are concerned -- and on our present very personal judgments as to how these materials and their sequences may be used to give chronological order and typological meaning to the surface collection of the Kermanshah valley system. Or, in far fewer words, this is how we <u>think</u> the surface materials are to be interpreted as of January, 1960. Our scheme must now be tested by excavation. It is offered here only in a <u>most tentative</u> form.

What follows below is our tentative ordering or classification of the sum total of the prehistoric materials collected from the 197 sites in the Kermanshah region. As yet, all eight of our groups have not been found together on one site. In fact most of the surface sites yielded traces of only one group, but sometimes hints of two or even three groups appeared. Dealing as we do, with prehistory, our scheme moves backwards from ca. 3000 B.C.

(1). At ca. 5000 to ca. 5750 years ago - several sub-phases of a pottery making tradition of which various elements resemble those of the Proto-Literate phase in southern Mesopotamia or those of Louis Le Breton's (Iraq XIX, 1957) Susa B to C groups. We note "Uruk" red and grey wares, beveled-rim bowls, drooping spouts and small pierced-lug handles on high-shouldered simple ware jars. It is interesting that in at least the last of these sub-phases there are flint blades which closely approach the "Canasnean" type.

(2). At ca. 5750 to ca. 7000 years ago - several sub-phases of a production of painted pottery which corresponds in general with that called Ubaid, and which in certain instances displays motifs of a Bakun A type.

(3). At ca.7000 to ca. 8000 years ago - several sub-phases of a well-developed and characteristic ceramic industry which includes a painted pottery style (of which some generalized but few specific motifs are "Halafian"), a red-surfaced series which may carry simple decoration with black paint or white paint or both, a rather glaze-like "Urfirnis" series, a red slipped and burnished series with certain characteristic profiles, and a series of coarse simple-ware, profiles which recall those of the Hassunan. We are not conscious of a recognizable description of this ceramic industry in the archaeological literature, but items of the industry did appear in surface collections we ourselves made at Tepe Giyan. When excavation is done on sites yielding this ceramic group it will probably be possible for the first time to give a fairly specific description of the associated flint industry.

(4). At ca. 8000 to ca. 9000 years ago - several sub-phases of a ceramic development which includes items known in the upper levels at the site of Jarmo. Along with these surface yields in pottery came obsidian and flint tools and fragments of ground stone bowls and bracelets which also fit within the Jarmo spectrum. Our overall impression of these materials is that they represent (in the various aspects and sub-phases our surface collections show) a longer time period than that of the duration of Jarmo site itself, and also certain degrees of excellence in pottery manufacture not seen at Jarmo.

(5). At ca. 9000 to ca. 12000 years ago - several sub-phases or regional variants of an industry in flint blades, including bladelets of microlithic scale, which are of the same generalized tradition as those of the lower or pre-ceramic levels of Jarmo or perhaps of some aspect of Karim Shahir later than the type site itself (there are not, however, such specific comparisons between this flint industry and that of pre-ceramic Jarmo or Karim Shahir, as exist in other artifact categories for comparing the foregoing surface-materials - group 4 - with those of upper level Jarmo). This flint industry,with

certain larger ground stone fragments for such items as milling stones and pestles and a few finer bowl or bracelet fragments, occurs on small tepes in the open-air. The phase these materials represent is certainly a "pre-ceramic" one, and heavy concentrations of fresh water clam shells of land snails on some of the sites may also suggest that it was back within a phase when food-collection predominated.

(6). At ca. 10500 years ago to ca. 16000 years ago (the overlap in the duration suggested for this group and that of group 5, above, is done quite consciously) - several sub-phases of a flint industry of blades and microblades of a generalized Zarzian type, which appear to make up the terminal stable occupation levels of the caves and rock-shelters (i.e., when these have a marked trace of occupation, and ignoring the signs of later casual "over nighting" by shepherds). Backed blades, burins, and scrapers of standard upper Paleolithic type are part of this industry.

(7). For some inderterminate range at ca. 40000 years ago or less - two sub-phases or aspects of a generalized flint industry of Mousterian type. One of these aspects nsists of tools of fairly large size (in Mousterian terms) and occ in the open hill-top scatters which may be "work-shop" sites. other aspect is hinted at in the surface collections from one roc elter in particular, and was represented in the materials dug sev al years ago by Professor Coon in a cave at Bisitun. These are smaller-sealed Mousterian tools than those of the first aspect.

(8). For some inderterminate range of ca. 100,000 years ago or less - an excellent example of a flint hand-axe of Acheulean type from one of the hill-top scatter sites. There are random flake tools in the same surface scatter which probably also refer to the period of the hand-axe. The importance of this chance find is that it established without question the fact that prehistoric man was at home within the territory of Iran just as early as in any of the surrounding territories. No prehistorian would have doubted this in theory, but it is satisfying to have made it established fact.

To date we have managed to carry on short term sondages on three sites, as follows:

Ta-3: the first sondage was done in a rock-shelter complex in the Tang-i-Knisht valley behind Taq-i-Bustan. The site had surface indications of materials of group 6 type (see above). However, no part of this shelter complex contained stratified prehistoric deposits. Duration of sondage - three days.

Ta-1: this rock shelter in the throat of the entrance to Tang-i-Knisht is one of the sites for which we have requested formal permission for excavation. Nevertheless, in order to make sure our choice had been a good one, we decided upon a sondage. We are now convinced that our choice was a very good one for the range of group 6 (and perhaps even into group 7 ??), and we look forward to formal excavation in this shelter. Duration of sondage - five days.

KM-28: this open site yielded very promising material of group 4 type, including marble bracelet fragments and unbaked clay figurine fragments of specific Jarmo type. Duration of sondage - four and one half days.

So much for the sketch of the results obtained until February 12. The last two weeks have been spent in Tehran where the long bruited seminar on the appearance and early development of agricultural communities in the Near East took place February 15-25 under the general auspices of the University of Tehran and its new Institute of Archaeology. Despite the considerable handicap of presentations largely in English to an Iranian audience, it seemed modestly successful on all scores. 1) Background Papers, discussions and good attendance were turned in by the principals, comprising members of our own group, of the University of Tehran Faculties, and experts from the U.N., F.A.O. and Cento laboratories present in Tehran, a fine international array of 6 Americans, 3 Iranians, 2 Indians, 4 Frenchmen and one Englishman. 2) Both Braidwoods, Howe, Negahban, Girshman and Indo Shekhar covered the prehistory of the Near East, Iran and the Indus Valley; P. J. Watson and Bessaignet applied ethnological comparisons; R.A. Watson and Rieben treated the geology and land forms; Dewan covered soils; Ganji outlined climate; Reed went into the animals and domestication; Pabot did the same for grains and other plants; Sheikh Nia spoke on forests; and Smith sketched in various applications of nuclear physics to archaeological problems of dating and identification. 3) An accompanying small archaeological display, based on the results of our surface survey in the Kermanshah Province, covered the prehistory of that area in the eight general stages we had set up to run from Palaelothic to Proto-literate times. 4) There was sustained interest and attendance by students, with a hard core of some 15-20 daily, of which 2-3 asked the most questions. 5) The subject matter ranged over the successive Palaeolithic and later archaeological periods and the evidence for, and possible significance of, increased specialization therein, and allowed the natural scientists to show there was no strong evidence for any natural causes of the great shift and, in effect, to throw the burden of explanation for it back onto the archaeologists and what they could divine about any human or cultural factors. 6) The University is to publish the results, in Farsi and English, probably as one of the first publications of the new Institute.

Let me now enlarge on the sounding at TAI, which is one of the research areas which I directed especially for the ASOR: The sounding at the shelter labelled TAI, which is of the time of our Group (6) and possibly Group (7), turned out excellently. In a 2 x 2 meter pit dug to 2 meters depth we have in the upper meter an undoubted Zarzian (though differing somewhat from what has been found in Iraq) and in the lower meter what, on present very limited evidence, appears to be a gradual transition to a blade industry that suggests a sort of Upper Palaeolithic close to the Baradostian (of Solecki at Shanidar Cave in Iraq). Thus, we may be uncovering a sequence which extends from a minor variant of the Zarzian (the accepted final Upper Palaeolithic of caves out here), and our Group (6)) back into older parts of the Upper Palaeolithic (either a new way stage or the Baradostian itself, either one to be placed between our Groups (6) and (7)) hitherto known only from the site of Shanidar. We have encountered two

hearths and collected some charcoal but, so far, the animal bones have been few and very poorly preserved. However, the deposits and tilt of the cave walls give every indication that at two meters depth we are not near the bottom and have a considerable depth still to go. There should be much of interest ahead of us and a good chance to cast considerable light on the Late Palaeolithic sequence of this general region, until now only very spottily known, and perhaps to uncover a sequence at this cave that extends back to the Mousterian (our Group (7)). The shelter is beautifully situated, overlooking the Kermanshah Plain to the south, and we have a fine crew of Kurds lined up to work there. We start full scale excavation next week in order to get through before their village moves en masse to the mountain pastures about May 1st, from which they return only occasionally during the summer to sell snow in the bazaar at Kermanshah.

We will then tackle the early pre-ceramic low mound, or midden, labelled Km. 27. This lies just east of the airport and south of Km.28, the Jarmo-like site Bob Braidwood is starting on next week. Km.27 was also sounded for five days and confirmed the original idea it was a good example of some sort of pre-ceramic settlement site of our Group (5). Eight 1.5 x 2 meter exploratory pits were spotted over the mound, as well as two useful and revealing core-holes 80cms. in diameter bored with appalling ease and speed into and through the site by a truck-born device loaned to us through the good offices of the Danish Kampsax Co. constructing roads here. The site has a few disturbed spots but over two meters depth of untouched deposit, quantities of fresh-water clam shells and considerable poorly preserved animal bone, no significant architecture detected as yet, a plentiful blade industry including microliths but lacking obsidian as yet, and a series of lightly baked clay figurines and other material (including marble bracelet fragments and other ground stone artifacts) strikingly similar to those found at Karim Shahir and the lower, pre-ceramic, levels of Jarmo. This site will be of particular interest as the excavations unfold. It is this period in time which we now suspect may have seen the beginnings of domestication of plants and animals, but we cannot yet detect specific evidences of this, only the survival of the last occupation of caves, our Group (6); the old ways of making stone tools and of collecting food. It follows on in our Group (4) by a stage that shows a clear-cut evidence of houses, villages and domestic plants and animals already advanced to a degree that implies previous developmental stages.

We have visited and collected from Tepe Givan, near Nehavand east of here. We visited and collected from Chashmeh Ali, near Reyy, while we were in Tehran; and during that same time four others of our group (the two Garthwaites, Elizabeth Morris and Kent Flannery) toured the Dizful Gorge Project, Susa, Chagar Zambil, Bebehan, Qasroun, Shahpur, Persepolis and Isfahan, returning with informative, vivid and enthusiastic accounts which will help to fill out our knowledge of the region.

Professor Louis Vanden Berghe paid us a flying visit yesterday just before returning to Ghent and after his recent survey in the south. He kindly went over our surface survey material and that from the soundings and was most helpful in cleaning up puzzles, pointing out

leads and confirming ideas in general from his extensive knowledge of prehistoric and historic material in Iran.

We are now clearing up backlogs of writing and processing before starting our excavations in earnest next week. The weather seems to be behaving, but one cannot be sure.

Bruce Howe
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1959-1960